DEBATES ON EUROPE:
WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS OF RUSSIA'S AND TURKEY'S EUROPEAN BID?

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Abstract

The study discusses Turkey's and Russia's European bid within a broader historical context of the debates on Europe. The prospect of the EU enlargement's stopping indefinitely sometime around 2007 inevitably entails two major consequences. Firstly, a new dividing line will be drawn across Europe between the nations that will be integrated within the Enlarged Union and those that will not. Secondly, the countries that are left out but still regard themselves European – and this seems to be the case of Turkey and Russia -- will have to face a tough dilemma. These nations will have to either revisit the thorny issue of their own cultural identity or push for reinventing the concept of Europe. Given the fact that the idea of Europe can be defined in a variety of ways, the second option is more likely. Thus, even if the enlargement process grinds to a halt at some point in the coming decade, the debates on Europe will continue.

As the NATO and EU enlargement summits closed late last year, the commentators started arguing – and apparently not without reason – that "we are entering the endgame of the EU and NATO enlargement process." If the analysts' assumptions are correct, then the new round of debates on what European community really is are all but inevitable. Indeed, if the process of building the "United Europe" is completed with the accession of 10 more Central and East European nations, and Brussels, after embracing the newcomers, shuts down the gates for good, the lofty task of the romantic early 1990s – that of fashioning "whole and free Europe" – will be only partially fulfilled. To be sure, all the EU member-states, including the new entrants, are free nations, no question about that. But will the EU after its

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coming (and final?) enlargement constitute the "whole Europe"? This is by
no means an idle question. In fact, it brings us to an even more fundamental
queries, such as: Which countries and on what grounds can be regarded
European? Where are Europe's borders? And finally, what is Europe? For if
the "Enlarged Union" of the 25 *is* the "true" Europe, if it fully embodies the
"European idea," then any nation that thinks it belongs, geographically
and/or historically, to Europe but is currently not an EU member or a
candidate state, has to face a hard question of how *it* relates to Europe.

In this paper I will try to address these tangled issues while discussing the
"European prospects" of two traditionally problematic countries situated on
Europe's periphery – Turkey and Russia. True, Turkey's and Russia's
formal status vis-à-vis the EU differ. Since December 1999 Turkey is an
officially recognized candidate state, whereas Russia has never seriously
raised the question of its formal accession to the EU. However, Turkey's
and Russia's "Eurasian nature" due to both countries' geographic location,
their long, painful (and still incomplete!) record of Europeanization, and the
historical perception of Turks and Russians as Europe's most significant
Others basically put these two nations on the same page. It is not a mere
coincidence, I believe, that the EU enlargement process – as it has been
planned up to 2007 – will have stopped right at the borders of Europe's two
former most formidable adversaries. I would suggest that there is a new
dividing line being drawn across Europe – some call it the "Golden Curtain"
– separating those countries that are being incorporated within the EU from
those that are not. What is even more significant, some commentators argue,
is that "this new line across Europe is not just economic and strategic but
also cultural, religious, sociological, and civilizational." "Many Europeans,"
points out the American political scientist Howard J. Wiarda,

> would prefer to deny that such 'civilizational', even ethnic
> and racial, criteria are being used to decide who gets in and
> who stays out of the European club, but the evidence that
> they are is incontrovertible; moreover, the cultural criteria
> often neatly correspond to the more 'objective',
> acknowledged political and economic criteria.[1]

The Brussels Eurocrats' official approach is that each prospective EU
member-state should be committed to the "European idea" defined
positively – i.e. through certain ("distinctively European") values, principles
and institutions. "If one were to sum up the 'European idea'", suggests
Martin Kremer, a counselor for the EU-related affairs at policy planning,
"one would probably have to call it a 'philosophy of freedom coupled with

practical solidarity', organizing society and international relations along democratic lines, on the basis of the rule of law." In operational terms, continues the official, the Copenhagen criteria can provide the best basis to translate such a contemporary view of Europe into practice.[2] There is, however, a much older and more traditional way of defining Europe *negatively* – i.e. in relation to opposites. In an article on national identity and the idea of European unity, Anthony D. Smith argued that

> Identities are forged out of shared experiences, memories and myths, in relation to those of other collective identities. They are in fact often forged through *opposition* to the identities of significant others, as the history of paired conflict so often demonstrates. Who or what, then, are Europe's significant others?[3]

It is this negative definition of European identity that ultimately shapes a political decision on who gets in and who does not. Quite symptomatically, the same Martin Kremer has to acknowledge that

> Present [EU] attitudes towards Turkey, for instance, are clearly colored by the fact that, well into the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was regarded as Europe's archenemy. Perceptions of Russia – and to a lesser extent of Ukraine – are obviously influenced by the fact that [in the] last century they used to be seen as only superficially European.

Within this context, it would be worthwhile to briefly explore the history of intellectual struggle for the "European unity" – in other words, a record of attempts by the some brightest minds to extend the notion of "European civilization" to the eastern part of the Old Continent. The particular significance of the EU eastward enlargement, in my opinion, lies in the fact that, institutionally, it will have crowned this intellectual process of enlarging Europe's mental map. By welcoming the Eastern Europeans in, the EU underscores their "kindred spirit," their "civilizational belonging" to the "real" Europe. As one observer succinctly put it, in Central and Eastern Europe, joining the European Union "is not just about agricultural quotas; rather, it is a *civilizational* issue." By the same token, a rather lukewarm attitude of the EU toward potential Turkish – and, theoretically, Russian – membership should be explained, to a large extent, by cultural and civilizational considerations. Turkey and Russia have probably ceased to be viewed by Europe as geopolitical adversaries but are still being perceived as cultural *aliens, others*. Thus, in the medium- and probably even long-term

perspective, an answer to the thorny question of where Europe now ends appears to be more or less clear. Europe ends along the eastern border of the "Enlarged Union" of the 25. Turkey and Russia are most likely to find themselves on the other side of the Golden Curtain.

Europe: elusive definition

"Europe," tells us the contemporary historian of the Old Continent, "is a relatively modern idea." However, adds he, one has to keep in mind that its content is quite controversial: "the geographical, cultural, and political parameters of the European community have always remained open to debate."[1] "The word 'Europe,'" the distinguished British historian Hugh Seton-Watson once noted, "has been used and misused, interpreted and misinterpreted in so many different meanings as almost any word in any language. There have been and are many Europes..."[5] The writer and critic Fritz J. Raddatz has coined a maxim that probably best reflects to what extent the concept of Europe remains indistinct and the meaning vague: "A specter is haunting Europe. Its name is Europe. It is on everyone's lips, yet no one defines it."

Our task is unlikely to become any easier if we try to deal with the various parameters of "Europe" one by one. For instance, what about Europe's geographical limits? Geographers conventionally describe Europe as nothing but a peninsula of Asia. This definition, the eminent Polish scholar Oscar Halecki pointed out, "creates the impression that Europe's limits are easy to define. But even from the merely geographical point of view such an impression is misleading."[6] For example, the notion of the Urals as the boundary between Europe and Asia is a quite recent idea dating back from Peter the Great's time. Moreover, it was a classical case of "ideological construction of geographical space," as Marc Bassin persuasively showed us in his seminal article.[7] The frontier on the Urals has been criticized by a number of analytical geographers. The validity of the Urals boundary was also questioned by such influential thinkers as Arnold Toynbee and Halford Mackinder. A number of geographical conferences organized by the Council of Europe in the 1960s to seek a generally accepted definition came to the conclusion that Europe could be considered a separate continent *only if* human activity in terms of settlement patterns, history, economic, cultural, and political life were taken into account. To make matters more complex, one Oxford scholar once wrote about a "tidal Europe" whose frontiers ebb and flow.[8]

The attempts to define "European history" appear to be no less futile than the exercises in drawing its geographical borders. In the mid-1980s the journal *History Today* organized an enquiry: a number of distinguished scholars were to answer a question "What is European history?" Most respondents failed to give a clear answer. Yet the reply of one contributor, A.J.P. Taylor, was particularly revealing:

> European history is whatever the historian wants it to be. It is a summary of the events and ideas, political, religious, military, pacific, serious, romantic, near at hand, far away, tragic, comic, significant, meaningless, anything else you would like it to be. There is only one limiting factor. It must take place in, or derive from, the area we call Europe. *But as I am not sure what exactly that area is meant to be, I am pretty well in a haze about the rest.*[9]

This brief discussion is designed to demonstrate one key point, namely the tremendous ambiguity of the very concept of Europe. Two important conclusions flow out of this thesis. Firstly, in each particular historical period the question of "who gets in and who stays out" was primarily a political question resolved by a relatively small group of the continent's core nations with the "impeccable European credentials." Secondly, the notion of Europe has not been static but has been re-made, revised and reinvented through the course of history. There has indeed been not one but rather, in the words of Seton-Watson, many Europes.

Since the time when the concept of "Europe" replaced the earlier concept of "Christendom" (sometime between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries) and until the post-World War I era Europe was essentially associated with the Western Europe or simply the "West." The "chosen fragments of the Peninsula," as one renowned student of the issue has aptly put it, appropriated the exclusive right to be designated as Europe. Among the sculptures surrounding the Albert Memorial (1876) in London is a group of figures symbolizing "Europe." It consists of only four figures – Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. The historical scholarship neatly reflects this "exclusivist" attitude. The French historian and statesman Francois Guizot in his *The History of Civilization in Europe* (1828-1830) explained the superiority of European civilization basing his argument first of all on the history of England and France. The outstanding German historian Leopold von Ranke in his *History of the Romance and Germanic Peoples* (1824) added Germans and Italians to the European peoples *par excellence*. In the preface to his study he declared his conviction

> that the complex of Christian peoples of Europe is to be
> considered as a whole, as one state, otherwise one could not
> properly understand the *enormous difference* that exists
> between the Occidental and the Oriental world, and the
> *great similarity* that exists between the Romance and the
> Germanic Peoples.

"Ranke," comments the Danish scholar Peter Bugge, "here reduced the carriers of European progress, civilization and culture to the Romance and the Germanic peoples, and so he excluded the Slavs of the Eastern Europe from any share in Europe's development and opened up for a racial interpretation of what separates Europe from non-Europe."[10] In the discourses on the history of Europe written between the end of the nineteenth and the middle of the twentieth century one is unlikely to find Portugal, Spain, or Scandinavia, just as there will be no Poland, no Bohemia, no Hungary, no Balkans, no Baltic nations. Russia sometimes may be included and sometimes may be excluded. There is definitely no Turkey. The authors of those history books appear to have accepted the idea of the fundamental dualism in Europe and considered only its western part really European. The great Swiss historian Gonzague de Reynold specifically made a basic distinction between two Europes of which only the western one is, in his view, *l'Europe europeenne*.[11] This European dualism whereby one of Europe's halves is perceived as being somehow non-European has, in fact, an illustrious intellectual pedigree. As Larry Wolff has demonstrated in his erudite book, a "semi-orientalized" Eastern Europe was "invented" as one of the "true" Europe's *others* by the philosophers of the Enlightenment. This "non-European" part of Europe gradually gave way to the real "Orient" beginning somewhere in Russia and the Ottoman Empire and stretching almost infinitely to the East.[12] When the noble Frenchman Louis-Philippe de Segur was traveling across East European plains on the eve of the French Revolution, he was absolutely sure he had left the European civilization behind. "One believes oneself to be leaving Europe completely," he wrote after entering Poland, "Everything might give the impression of retreating ten centuries in time."[13] In the beginning of the nineteenth century a political dimension was added to the civilization discourse in the discussion of the differences between Europe's "West" and "East." In 1822, a French commentator, Abbe de Pradt, explained the continent's split as a result of "the division of Europe into two zones of sociability, which fight each other and which make any common language between its two parts impossible." De Pradt drew this dividing line from Stockholm to Cadiz and called it a "degrading line of liberty as you move

closer to Asia."[14] The perception of the "underdeveloped" and "uncivilized" Eastern Europe persisted well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Western Europe's condescending attitude toward the East can easily be discerned, for example, in that line from *My Fair Lady* when Professor Higgins proclaims that "she was born *Hungarian*," which always brings down the house with derisive laughter.

Debate on Eastern Europe

Arguably, it took almost two centuries for the elites of the continent's leading powers to have overcome "the parochial view of a Europe based exclusively on the prosperous West."[15] In the twentieth century, there were three prominent European thinkers who, I believe, had made a particularly important intellectual contribution to the bridging of the grand divide between Europe's "West" and "East." They are Oscar Halecki, Hugh Seton-Watson and Norman Davies. Halecki, a Polish scholar who later emigrated to the United States, was instrumental in shaping, in the inter-war period, the idea of "East-Central Europe" – a concept that would become so popular among the East European dissidents in the 1970s and 1980s.[16] In the aftermath of the First World War, this newly invented notion of "East-Central Europe" was designed to describe the "successor states" – from Finland and Poland in the north to Yugoslavia in the south – that emerged from under the rubble of three imperial powers – Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman. The concept's primary political task was to underscore the fundamental European-ness of the region. "It appears that some countries which are situated in the eastern, or at least the east-central, part of Europe have particularly close ties, cultural and even political, with the Latin West of the continent," contended Halecki.[17] The lifespan of the domain that the idea of "East-Central Europe" intended to describe, however, was quite short. "A pro-Western buffer zone between Soviet Russia and Germany, it was the product of exceptional circumstances: the power vacuum created by the simultaneous World War I collapse of Germany and Russia. And it lasted only as long as these exceptional circumstances did."[18] After the Second World War, in 1950, just a year before a momentous step was taken to set up European Coal and Steel Community, Halecki published his important study titled *The Limits and Divisions of European History*. In this magisterial work Halecki has formulated his major thesis in the most straightforward way. He forcefully argued that, despite all the vagaries of its unfortunate history, Eastern Europe was no less European than Western Europe – that both alike were integral part of one great community of peoples, sharing the same spiritual

ideals, political values and cultural traditions. "The term Western civilization," asserted Halecki,

> entails the *practical limitation* of European history to Western Europe and its leading powers. Even if it is true that in some periods these Western powers played a particularly important role, their identification with Europe at large is almost as misleading as the identification of European history with world history.[19]

There is little doubt that Halecki's ideas have, to a significant extent, influenced the "Central Europe" debate of the 1980s launched by the Czech author Milan Kundera and carried forward by a number of outstanding East European intellectuals.[20] In the words of one knowledgeable observer, Timothy Garton Ash, historically, this debate was looking back toward an idealized harmony of the multinational Austria-Hungary and forward "beyond Yalta." Politically, it was looking away from Soviet Russia, toward an idealistically defined "West." The reinvented concept of Central Europe, wrote in 1989 Jacques Rupnik, a Senior Fellow at Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques in Paris,

> represents, on the one hand, an assertion of a historical and cultural identity distinct from that imposed for forty five years on the nations of the other half of Europe by the Soviet empire. On the other hand, it is also part of the continuing political search for an alternative to the partition of Europe.[21]

On the opposite side of the Iron Curtain, a fundamental idea of European unity was being energetically asserted by Hugh Seton-Watson, Professor of Russian History at the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies. In April 1985, he delivered a lecture at the Royal Institute of International Affairs that was rightly called his testament on the concept of Europe. Two main theoretical points he made in this lecture deserve our attention here – the complementary role of the East and West European nations, and the pluralism of Europe's cultural tradition. Following into Halecki's footsteps, Seton-Watson argued against excluding Eastern Europeans in the name of Western civilization:

> The European cultural community includes the peoples living beyond Germany and Italy...something in no way annulled by the fact that they cannot today belong to an all-European economic or political community...Nowhere in

> the world is there so wide-spread a belief in the reality, and the importance of a European cultural community, as in the countries lying between the EEC and the Soviet Union.[22]

Furthermore, Seton-Watson stated that European culture was by no means a monolithic one:

> The interweaving of the notions of Europe and of Christendom is a fact of History which even the most brilliant sophistry cannot undo... But it is no less true that there are strands in European culture that are not Christian: the Roman, the Hellenic, arguably the Persian, and (in modern centuries) the Jewish.[23]

It is noteworthy, though, that he was far more cautious, if not skeptical, about Islamic heritage: "Whether there is also a Muslim strand is more difficult to say."

Norman Davies, who proudly calls himself Hugh Seton-Watson's intellectual disciple whose legacy he follows "most closely," wrote his authoritative *Europe: A History* after the communism's collapse in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union's unraveling. By the time his book came out, the discussion on the EU eastward enlargement was well under way. Being one of the Great Britain's most eminent scholars, Davies appears to have significantly influenced the Europe debate in its critical phase. To be sure, his book didn't contain policy recommendations, but it still carried quite a lot of intellectual weight. As *the London Review of Books* put it, "after Davies, it will never be possible to write a history of Europe in the old way again." Faithful to the intellectual tradition laid down by Halecki and Seton-Watson, Davies calls for a thorough revision of what he labels "the established canon of European Culture." His argument stresses two fundamental points: East Europeans' kinship with the "West," and Europe's cultural diversity. "The title of 'Europe,'" contends Davies,

> like the earlier label of 'Christendom'... can hardly be arrogated by one of its several regions. Eastern Europe is no less European for being poor, or underdeveloped, or ruled by tyrants... Nor can the Eastern Europe be rejected because it is 'different'. All European countries are different. All *West* European countries are different. And there are important similarities which span the divide... Their fundamental unities are no less obvious than their manifest diversity.[24]

The dramatic socio-economic and political transformations in East-Central Europe over the last decade coupled with the strategic interests of Europe's "West" appear to have lent tremendous authority to the idea of the fundamental unity of Europe. What we are witnessing right now is, in fact, the triumph of the school of thought that for decades has staunchly defended the East Europeans' "unalienable right" to the "true" European-ness. The incorporation of Europe's "East" into the EU has sealed the controversial issue of the "easterners'" historical and cultural belonging. The decision on their formal accession is at the same time an act of their *official* recognition as "real" Europeans.

Russia and Turkey: Europe's periphery or outsiders?

Russian and Turkish elites assert that their nations are European too. In Russia's case, the elite's identification with Europe dates back to the eighteenth century. Peter the Great had "cut out a window on Europe," as Pushkin famously phrased it. In 1767, the Empress Catherine the Great unequivocally stated, in an important legislative document, that "Russia is a European Power." Turkish claims to European identity are much more recent and tinged with a certain sense of ambiguity. Turkey's former minister of foreign affairs Ismail Cem has argued that his country possesses a really unique – one would say, a centaur-like – identity. "We consider ourselves both European... and Asian," Cem stated in a programmatic article.[25] And yet, despite the Turks' and the Russians' definition of themselves as Europeans and their attempts at adopting European institutions and culture, the question persists – *Are* they Europeans? There can be various views on this issue, of course, but "the fact remains," Penelope D. Safioleas correctly points out, "that *until Europeans see them as such*, they will not be admitted into the group identity, and accession into the European Union will consistently be postponed and possibly eventually denied outright."

Now, it would be only proper to have a brief look at how Russia and Turkey fared in the debate on Europe. To be sure, addressing this issue in full would demand a separate big study: here I will consciously limit myself to the analysis of the views of the three outstanding European intellectuals I've referred to above. However, we will probably get even a more revealing picture since in the twentieth century those scholars have been the most ardent champions of the idea of European unity and staunchest advocates of the East European peoples.

What is truly remarkable is how very similar are the views of Halecki, Seton-Watson and Davies on the issue of Russia's and Turkey's relation to Europe. The thing that immediately catches an observer's eye is that Russia's and Turkey's socio-cultural peculiarities seemed to be too difficult to stomach even for the most broad-minded proponents of the European cultural diversity.

Oscar Halecki's views on Turkey are very traditional, stemming from the European historiographical – and, broader – cultural canon of the nineteenth century. For him, the Ottoman Empire (he never discussed the Republic's history) was a "typically Asiatic state." He dismissed its half a millennium-long engagement with Europe as a rude and ruinous intrusion. "From the *European point*," argues Halecki, "it must be observed that the Ottoman Empire, *completely alien to its European subjects in origin, tradition, and religion*, far from integrating them in a new type of culture, brought them nothing but a degrading foreign domination which interrupted for approximately four hundred years their participation in European history."[26] In his view, the physical presence of non-European – and even anti-European – Empire of the Turks in Southern Europe had only led to one unfortunate development – namely, a protracted exclusion of the Balkan peoples from the community of European nations and from the body of European history. "During these centuries [of occupation]," asserted the Polish scholar, "the European frontier of the Ottoman Empire... was the south-eastern *limit* of the European community and of its history."[27] Hugh Seton-Watson's approach seems to be a little bit subtler than that of Halecki's. He, as we remember, was even musing on the probable presence of a "Muslim strand" in the European cultural heritage. He has shrunk, however, from giving a definitive answer to this controversial question. The most revealing, though, is Norman Davies' stance on the issue. The author who has been so iconoclastic and innovative in dealing with East European history has proved as traditional as any of his many predecessors in interpreting Turkey's relations with Europe. In Davies' picture of Europe, Turkey and its history (both Ottoman and post-imperial) are absolutely marginal. He never even poses a conceptual question of how Turkey relates to Europe. There is no doubt that for the British author who has offered the newest interpretation of the continent's history Turkey is a clear outsider. Suffice it to mention that in the Index to the 1400-page volume that is being touted as the "latest word of the European historiography" there is just one (!) entry on the Republic of Turkey. In Davies' eyes, Turkey is definitely non-European. "The border of the shrinking enclave of what came to be

called 'Turkey-in-Europe' formed one of Europe's most deep-seated *cultural fault-lines*."[28]

At first blush, Russia's case seems to somewhat differ from that of Turkey's, if only because the issue of Russia's relation to Europe has been debated for much longer time: "For more than five hundred years the cardinal problem in defining Europe has centered on the inclusion or exclusion of Russia."[29] Halecki and Seton-Watson were brooding on this thorny question in the shadow of the Iron Curtain, and the Soviet Union's Communist dictatorship appeared to have colored their vision of Russia-Europe relationship. "Bolshevism turned his back to Europe," Seton-Watson stated bluntly. However, he was acutely aware of much older opinions, ideological constructs, and stereotypes that were shaping the perception of a "civilizational divide" in the post WWII Europe. "Attitudes to the concept of Europe today have striking similarities to those of distant past," noted the British scholar. "In particular, the two dichotomies of lands of civilization and barbarism, and lands of the true believers and infidels reappear under new names on both sides of the Lubeck—Trieste line."[30]

Struggling to resolve "the major problem of the relationship between Russia and Europe," Halecki suggested one had to look at the issue through the prism of the idea of freedom. The latter, he argued, was always at the core of European political culture and civilization. In his own words, "the idea of freedom is closely associated with the earliest foundations of Europe." Thus, Halecki continued,

> Whenever in any region of geographical Europe an apparent solution of the basic political issues has been reached by simply suppressing freedom, that region has been placed, at least temporarily, outside historical Europe.

Basing his argument on the criterion of freedom, it was not difficult for Halecki to define the nature of Soviet Russia. This "Red Tsardom," wrote he, "was and remained *non-European* and *anti-European*." So, at least for the period after 1917, the issue of Europe's eastern borders seemed to be clear: Europe ends where Communist Russia begins: "the western boundaries of the Union of Soviet Republics [constitute], without any doubt, the eastern limit of Europe." However, Halecki also questioned the seemingly European character of the pre-revolutionary Russia. Again, being guided by the notion of freedom, he expressed his surprise at the fact that "a Christian state of European origin developed a conception of freedom *so*

different from the European as to be practically its negation, with despotism and nihilistic anarchy as alternatives."[31]

Similarly, for Seton-Watson, the most peculiar feature of Russia throughout its historical existence is a lack of political pluralism. One single factor that dominates the course of Russian history, argues the scholar, is the principle of autocracy. "In this respect Russian history *differs from that of all western European countries*, except perhaps Spain. The Western nations were formed in a long struggle between the monarchical power and the social elite... Whatever one may feel of the merits of the contending parties, one cannot deny the existence of the struggle... In Russia... it hardly existed." Here is an irony (or tragedy?) of Russian history. Every important social change -- including several major fits of Europeanization -- "was due to monarchical power." However, the progressive Europeanizing reforms had to be carried out within a clearly non-European socio-political context. "There was never any suggestion that government by autocrat should give place to government in which power would be divided between classes and institutions."[32] Thus the full transformation could never be achieved, and Russia would always find itself in the vicious cycle of bungled reforms styled on the European model.

In Davies' narrative, Russia figures much more prominently than Turkey. In a theoretical introduction to his book the author does ponder the question of the relations between Russia and Europe. And yet, in its treatment of Russia-Europe interplay this otherwise pioneering study sticks to the traditional approach firmly established in the European (and, broader, Western) scholarship – almost like it does with regard to Turkey! Which is, of course, both symptomatic and revealing: a leading European scholar arguing at the very end of the twentieth century that Russia -- whether Tsarist, Soviet, or post-Communist -- has been a "bad fit" for Europe. Davies appears not to be influenced by the newest revisionist approach of Martin Malia who aimed to demonstrate that Russia was a "normal" European country set on a path of political and economic convergence with its more advanced Western neighbors.[33] "Throughout modern history", contends Davies, "an Orthodox, autocratic, economically backward but expanding Russia" could hardly qualify as a "true" European state. Even after the collapse of the Communist regime, "skepticism about Russia's European qualifications continued to circulate both inside and outside Russia." There are at least three major "drawbacks" that, in Davies' opinion, keep the present-day Russian Federation outside Europe. It is "not a cohesive nation-state, ripe for democracy;" it is "still a multinational

complex spanning Eurasia," and it still manifests "imperial reflexes." The latter characteristic, the British historian believes, is particularly pernicious; if it persists, it will be one of the main stumbling blocks on Russia's path to European integration. "Unless [Russia] could find ways of shedding the imperialist legacy, like all other ex-imperial states in Europe, it could not expect to be considered a suitable candidate for any European community," states Davies.[31]

A brief discussion of the views of the three leading European scholars who have conceptualized – basically, through the course of the entire twentieth century -- the controversial issue of what Europe is and where its limits are, sheds some light on the deep-seated historical-cultural perceptions that appear to underlie the EU decisions on eastern enlargement taken at the turn of the millennium. Howard Wiarda persuasively argues in his research that

> In the process of determining who belongs on which side of the Golden Curtain, all the old cultural, geographic, religious, historical, and ethnic reckonings, sentiments, biases, and dividing lines of the past are again coming into play.[35]

But cultural biases and stereotypes are not eternally fixed; they are fluid and susceptible to change. Thus, Eastern Europe – a region that at some point in the past was perceived as (Western) Europe's *other* – has eventually shed its alien image and been admitted into the group identity. Not all the cultural-historical perceptions and images, however, wither away easily. Some deeply ingrained ideas about Turkey and Russia being fundamentally different from the "real" Europe are likely to continue defining the configuration of the EU eastern frontier.

Can the Europeanization project succeed?

To paraphrase one famous witticism, all (European) countries are different but there are countries that are more different than others. In the eyes of the European observers, Russia and Turkey undoubtedly fall into this latter category. What, then, underlie the strong perception of these two nations' fundamental otherness? I would suggest that it is primarily the different *civilizational* basis on which all their history, culture, myths, mentality, values, symbols, politics, ultimately, all their entire way of life have been built. "For nearly a thousand years past," pointed out Arnold Toynbee, the Russians have... been members, not of our Western civilization, but of the Byzantine – a sister society, of the same Graeco-Roman parentage as ours, but a *distinct and different civilization* from our own, nevertheless."[36] The

Turks, being Muslims, have naturally been regarded in Europe for centuries as an even more distinct, distant, and alien civilization. The outstanding Belgian historian Henri Pirenne, while describing in his acclaimed *A History of Europe* the first military contacts between the Europeans and the advancing Turks in the Balkans, made a characteristic remark: "There was only one possible means of stopping the Turks, and that was to absorb them into Western civilization; but since they professed Islam, this was simply unthinkable."[37] Historically, Turkey and Russia were not *born* European, the argument goes; rather, at one point they decided to *become* European, thus turning themselves into the *Europeanizing* states. However, for the countries with a long historical tradition, to reinvent themselves is not an easy task. Any Europeanization project inevitably causes deep splits and ruptures in the nation's social fabric. Ultimately, a Europeanizing country ends up becoming what some political scientists term a "torn state." It is these considerations that likely make most Europeans somewhat skeptical about Russia's and Turkey's "European bid." A key question the Europeans appear to ask themselves is whether a "torn country" can ever succeed in remaking itself, shaping a new identity, and eventually attaining a new "wholeness."

"A torn country," says Samuel Huntington, "has a single predominant culture which places it in one civilization but its leaders want to shift it to another civilization. They say, in effect, 'We are one people and belong in one place but we want to change that place.'" In other words, "the people of torn countries agree on who they are but disagree on which civilization is properly their civilization."[38] Significantly, in Huntington's view, Russia and Turkey are the classical torn countries, for the leadership of both states at one point decided their societies should Europeanize -- that is, reject their non-European culture and institutions and "join Europe". Russia has become a torn country at least since Peter the Great, divided over the issue of whether it is a part of European civilization or is the core of a distinct Eurasian Orthodox civilization. Turkey, after experimenting with the timid Europeanizing reforms in the nineteenth century, has become a torn country par excellence since Mustafa Kemal Ataturk who, starting in the 1920s, "led Westernization to its most radical forms."[39]

Huntington's theory is also a handy intellectual tool for comparing the Europeanizing efforts of Russia and Turkey. In the political scientist's opinion, "for a torn country successfully to redefine its civilizational identity, at least three requirements must be met. First, the political and economic elite of the country has to be generally supportive of and

enthusiastic about this move. Second, the public has to be at least willing to acquiesce in the redefinition of identity. Third, the dominant elements in the host civilization, in most cases the West, have to be willing to embrace the convert."[40] If we look at the two countries through this conceptual prism, we will see that for many years Turkey has more or less met two of the three minimum requirements, namely the first and the second (support of the elites and acquiescence of the public). This explains its quite impressive progress over the last fifty years. However, the elites of the European civilization were not receptive. This is an underlying cause of the difficulties Turkey has been experiencing in its painful negotiations with the EU. At the same time, this demonstrative and humiliating neglect on the part of Europe gives additional boost to the resurgence of Islam within Turkey, activates anti-Western sentiments among public and is fraught with potential risk of undermining the secularist, pro-Western orientation of Turkish elites.[41] In Russia's case, in contrast to the Turkish one, the inability to fully meet the first two requirements due to the deep division of political elite and the general public over the issue of Russian identity has always been the gravest problem. Thus, the fitful path of Russia's Europeanization can be explained by this fateful Westernizing-Slavophile duality, constituting "an inalienable trait of the [Russian] national character."

In general, Huntington is rather skeptical about the prospects of the torn countries like Russia and Turkey to eventually turn into European civilization's member countries. Their historical experience, writes he, "demonstrates…the strength, resilience, and viscosity of indigenous cultures and their ability to renew themselves and to resist, contain, and adapt Western imports." "Political leaders imbued with the hubris to think that they can fundamentally reshape the culture of their societies are destined to fail," continues Huntington.

> While they can introduce elements of Western culture, they are unable permanently to suppress or to eliminate the core elements of their indigenous culture. Conversely, the Western virus, once it is lodged in another society, is difficult to expunge. The virus persists but is not fatal; the patient survives but is never whole. Political leaders can make history but cannot escape history. They produce torn countries; they do not create Western societies. They infect their country with a cultural schizophrenia which becomes its continuing and defining characteristic.[42]

The decision-makers   in Brussels and other EU centers appear to have no less amount of skepticism about the European vocation of the "torn" -- or, to use the other expression, "hermaphrodite" – countries. A clear civilizational bias, some analysts say, can be perceived in how the "new Europe" is being defined. This is how one commentator has recently described -- specifically challenging conventions of political correctness -- the emerging contours of the Enlarged Union: "Christian Europe is part of the new Europe; Orthodox Europe is marginal; Muslim Europe is out."[43]

Conclusion

The latest enlargement decisions have dramatically changed the traditional politico-geographic "image" of Europe. As one Russian scholar perceptively notes, the EU push to the East is "drastically changing the mental map of Europe, leading to the 'shrinking' – in fact, disappearance – of the image of Eastern Europe." Basically, the notion of Eastern Europe, says the analyst, is now associated almost exclusively with Russia. As for the image of Central Europe, it is being viewed now as a "halfway house" – a kind of "purgatory" or "customs office" -- on the way to the "real" Europe.[44] Undoubtedly, the notion of Central Europe will soon lose whatever historical or political meaning it used to have and dissolve in the idea of Greater or United Europe.

As this discussion intended to demonstrate, so far "Europe" has been defined in a traditional way, i.e. *negatively* -- in contrast to what is considered non-European. However, so long as there are countries that regard themselves European but are rejected by the members of the EU club on cultural or civilizational grounds, the negative definition of European identity will be constantly challenged. The "outsiders" will continue pushing for the *positive* construction of "Europe" that is geared to a set of values, principles, and institutions. The debates on Europe are far from over: they will go on.

Endnotes

[1] Howard J. Wiarda, "Where Does Europe End? The Politics of NATO and EU Enlargement," *World Affairs*, Spring 2002, vol. 164, no. 4, p. 148.
[2] See Martin Kremer, "The EU and the Challenge of Defining Its External Borders," *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Spring 2000.
[3] Anthony D. Smith, "National Identity and the Idea of European Unity," *International Affairs*, 1992, vol. 68, no. 1, p. 75.
[4] Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (London: Pimlico, 1997), p. 7, 8.

[5] Hugh Seton-Watson. "What Is Europe. Where Is Europe? From Mystique to Politique." *Encounter*, July/August 1985, vol. 65, no. 2, p. 9.

[6] Oscar Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History* (London & New York: Sheed & Ward, 1950), p. 65.

[7] Marc Bassin, "Russia Between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space," *Slavic Review*, 1991, vol. 50, no. 1, p. 1-17.

[8] W.H. Parker. "Is Russia in Europe? The Geographical Viewpoint," in *An Historical Geography of Russia* (London, 1968), p. 27-29.

[9] See *History Today*, January 1986, vol. 36, p. 46-50.

[10] Peter Bugge. "Asia and the Idea of Europe: Europe and Its Others," in *Asian Values and Vietnam's Development in Comparative Perspective* (Hanoi, 2000).

[11] Gonzague de Reynold. *La Formation de l'Europe* (Fribourg en Suisse, [1944]), vol. 1, p. 55.

[12] Larry Wolff. *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, 1994). See also his article "Voltaire's Public and the Idea of Eastern Europe: Toward a Literary Sociology of Continental Division," in *Slavic Review*, 1995, vol. 54, no. 4, p. 932-942.

[13] Quoted in Davies. *Europe*, p. 11.

[14] See Heinz Gollwitzer. *Europabild und Europagedanke: Beitrage zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munchen: C.H. Beck, 1964).

[15] Davies, *Europe*, p. 14.

[16] See some of Halecki's articles written in the 1930s-1940s: "Qu'est ce que l'Europe Orientale?", *Bulletin d'Information des Sciences historiques en Europe Orientale*, 1934, vol. 6, p. 82-93; "Der Begriff der osteuropäischen Geschichte," *Zeitschrift fur osteuropaische Geschichte*, 1934, vol. 9, p. 1-21; "Europa srodkowa," *Encyklopedia nauk politycznych* (Warszawa, 1937), vol. 2, p. 127-129; "Europe centrale ou Europe orientale," *La Voix de Varsovie*, 1940, vol. 1, p. 5-13; "The Historical Role of Central-Eastern Europe," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 1944, vol. 232, p. 9-18.

[17] Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History*, p. 138.

[18] Jacques Rupnik, "Central Europe or Mitteleuropa?", in Stephen R. Graubard, ed., *Eastern Europe... Central Europe... Europe* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), p. 241.

[19] Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History*, p. 11.

[20] See George Schopflin and Nancy Wood, eds., *In Search of Central Europe* (London: Polity Press, 1989).

[21] Rupnik, "Central Europe or Mitteleuropa?", p. 234.

[22] Seton-Watson, "What Is Europe, Where Is Europe?", p. 14.

[23] Ibid., p. 16.

[24] Davies, *Europe*, p. 28.

[25] Ismail Cem, "Turkey and Europe: Looking to the Future from a Historical Perspective," *Perceptions*, June-August 2000, p. 6.
[26] Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History*, p. 77-78.

[27] Ibid., p. 78.
[28] Davies, *Europe*, p. 646.
[29] Ibid., p. 10.

[30] See Seton-Watson, "What Is Europe, Where Is Europe?"
[31] See Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History*, p. 186, 189, 99, 189-190.
[32] Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1967), p. 10-11.
[33] See Martin Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 2000). In all fairness, Malia's revisionism is nothing but a revival of a long and venerable historiographic tradition initiated by Russian liberals and positivists in the nineteenth century. They would argue that Russia was always part of the historical European community, except that its association with the "true" Europe was not equally close in all periods owing to certain factors that delayed Russia's development. Russian liberals contended that Russia never was basically different from the rest of Europe; the only difference to be admitted, even in consideration of the nineteenth-century "Europeanization" of Russia, is explained by the fact that, in some respects, Russia still *was*, at that time, what Europe *had been* before. As T.G. Masaryk once put it, "Russland ist was Europa war."
[34] Davies, *Europe*, p. 10-13.
[35] Wiarda, "Where Does Europe End?", p. 157.
[36] Arnold Toynbee, *Civilization On Trial and The World and the West* (New York: Meridian Books, 1961), p. 149-150.
[37] Henri Pirenne, A History of Europe (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), vol. 2, p. 216.
[38] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 138.
[39] Halil Inalcik, "Turkey Between Europe and the Middle East," *Perceptions*, March-May 1998, p. 15.
[40] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 139.
[41] One has to be mindful, of course, of the more important, internal sources of Islam's growing popularity. As Professor Inalcik points out, "as a most recent development, Islamic identity increased vigorously throughout the country, mainly as a result of deep disappointment with the social and economic development expected from a secular Western policy." See ibid. p. 17.
[42] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 154.

[43] Wiarda, "Where Does Europe End?", p. 175.

[44] See Dmitrii Zamiatin, "Evropa: otkrytyi obraz," *Russkii Zhurnal*, June 26, 2002, www.russ.ru/politics/20020626-zam.html